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United States Department of State

Washington, D. C. 20520

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ACTION MEMORANDUM BP 12/14

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December 15, 1990

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5/25/95



TO : The Secretary  
THRU : P - Robert M. Kimmitt <sup>DMIC</sup>  
FROM : EA - Richard Shifter

SUBJECT: Suggested letter from Secretary Baker to Foreign Minister Qian Qichen

ISSUE FOR DECISION

Whether to sign attached letter to Foreign Minister Qian Qichen of the People's Republic of China. We are, as you know concerned that the Chinese view my expected travel as part of a serious dialogue, not merely a cosmetic step.

ESSENTIAL FACTORS

Unfortunately, the President was not able to sign today the letter you recommended we forward for his signature to the President of China, Yang Shangkun. Since I am leaving on Sunday, December 16 I would like to carry a letter with me addressed to the Foreign Minister from you to be delivered once I arrive.



B1

Congress has taken interest in the trip and I will undoubtedly be asked to testify upon my return. If I have to report that no progress has been made, the reaction could be worse than if I had never gone. We thus want to make every effort to emphasize to the Chinese that this must be a substantive dialogue.

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RECOMMENDATION

That you sign the attached letter to Foreign Minister Qian Qichen of the Peoples Republic of China.

Approve RMC for Disapprove \_\_\_\_\_

Drafted by: HA:JUnderiner:bj  
12/14/90 7-1337

Clearances: EAP/CM:KWiedemann  
P:CKartman  
H:WMiele  
C:RWilson

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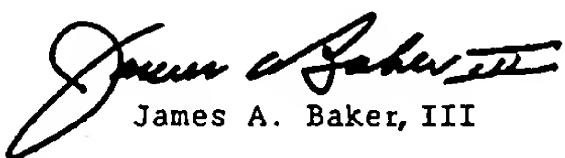
THE SECRETARY OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

RELEASED

Dear Mr. Foreign Minister:

During your recent visit to Washington we discussed the fundamental importance which the United States attaches to respect for human rights in China. Bilateral relations with foreign governments are greatly influenced by the strong feelings of the general American public on respect for human rights around the globe. The United States does not suggest adherence to standards it sets unilaterally, but to internationally recognized human rights norms such as those embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations.

I am pleased that Assistant Secretary Schifter will be travelling to China from December 17-21 for discussions on human rights. I hope that his visit will contribute to a meaningful dialogue on human rights issues and that this will lead to a positive resolution of those human rights problems which have created difficulties for our relationship in the past.



James A. Baker, III

Foreign Minister Qian Qichen  
Peoples Republic of China  
Beijing

Drafted: HA/BA: MArietti *jk*  
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Cleared: HA: RSchifter  
EAP/CM: KWiedemann  
P: CKartman } *jk*  
H: WMiele  
C: RWilson